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FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5318

INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC

RHMFSS/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC

RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC

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RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0086

RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY 0031

RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 5865

UNCLAS TRIPOLI 000779

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/MAG; STATE PLEASE PASS USTR PAUL BURKHEAD; ENERGY  
FOR GINA ERICKSON; COMMERCE FOR NATE MASON

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: LIBYA NAMES ALI SUGHEIR NEW CHAIRMAN OF NATIONAL OIL  
COMPANY

REF: TRIPOLI 765

**¶1.** (SBU) On September 30, 2009, Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) published on its website a notice that the Secretary of the General People's Committee (prime minister-equivalent) issued a decree designating Ali Sugheir to assume the functions of the Secretary of NOC Management Committee (also commonly referred to as Chairman) in addition to the functions already entrusted to him as a NOC Director General. Sugheir, who was already Acting Chairman of the NOC (reftel), thereby replaces Shokri Ghanem as the head of the state-owned company.

**¶2.** (SBU) Biographic Note: Born in Benghazi in 1959, Sugheir has been the Director General of the NOC since 2008. Prior to joining the NOC, he was chairman of Sirte Oil Company, which is considered one of the most important of the NOC's subsidiaries. A graduate of Glasgow University in the UK, Sugheir was promoted to chairman after a stint as exploration manager. He is also a graduate of the University of Garyounis (Benghazi) where he studied Geology.

**¶3.** (SBU) Comment: The promotion of Sugheir follows the prediction of diplomats in Tripoli that a technocrat would be named to replace Shokri Ghanem, a prominent politician and former prime minister (2003-2005). However, some industry insiders believe that the announcement is not the permanent appointment and is simply a resolution confirming Sugheir as interim Chair. They expect Ghanem, who is reportedly close to Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi, to make a return to politics. End comment.

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